
Jeremy's World: When on the move, it's often a case of Plug 'n' Pray

By **Jeremy Clark** on April, 2 2018 | Jeremy's World



They told us that with the coming of the “Internet of things” and the Wi-Fi revolution, our lives would all be infinitely simpler and more convenient.

They lied.

It's probable as you wander around next week's WTCE in Hamburg you may be furiously waving your phone trying to scoop up more bandwidth or cursing as your pudgy thumbs struggle to key in the password of N897*yn&v87\$DXX\$yn just so you could find out why your flight has been cancelled.

Our dependence on this ridiculous situation is only going to get worse as the numbskulls who run the software empires in Silicon Valley “upgrade” (read “downgrade - look at Skype for example) products and as more complex defences against hackers add more layers of frustration.

There's no such thing as the promised “Plug'n'Play”. Its plug, register, sign-in, get a password, verify with email, re-verify if you have moved 10 yards from where you were since you did it, agree, log in, pay and then – if you're lucky, play.

As if to demonstrate the wide variance of ludicrousness in Changi airport in Singapore, you only have to select the airport Wi-Fi and it usually just works. In Zurich you have to search around for some machine where you scan your boarding pass which then issues a piece of paper with some ridiculously complicated password. Why? How else did I get airside? What's the point of that? And why the idiotic passwords which are not necessary and often blatantly obvious (Cathay123 in the HKG CX lounge. Tough to crack!).

We have added further stress of having to ensure our phones are always working. This means tripping over panic-stricken millennials sprawled on the floor in airports charging up their devices from a socket or breaking down with grief as the battery finally dies, and life as they understand it, dies with it.

Recently I arrived at a gate to be told the flight was delayed. There was no mention of this on the display boards. “Why didn't you announce this? – I could have stayed in the lounge”. “Oh – you need to check your App for an update” came the reply. I would have had I been able to log in which required me to enter my email address into a tiny field, get a verification code to my account which I then had to key into another field. First off, I never use email on my phone and secondly I am of an age where I just don't have that kind of time to waste. Just tell me with an announcement or display it immediately.

In 1981 the newly acquired Mrs. C and I flew from Switzerland to Hawaii and back with nothing other than a fist full of paper ID90 tickets and a printed timetable. A handful of quarters if we needed to call an airline, and some common sense.

It was stress-free heaven!